

BUDGET TRAVEL Timing helps beat prices in skiing eastern slopes

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ABSTRACT (ABSTRACT)

BY [MARGARET PITON] WINTER ISN'T here yet, but to most skiers it is never too early to start planning a ski vacation. At Sugarloaf Mountain in Maine, early-season skiers will get some price breaks. Two days of skiing and two nights' lodging at the Slopeside Sugarloaf Mountain Hotel cost \$104 U.S. per person, based on double occupancy, which isn't a bad deal considering that the normal cost of a daily lift ticket alone is \$28 U.S.

FULL TEXT

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Saturday, November 07, 1987

MARGARET PITON

BY MARGARET PITON WINTER ISN'T here yet, but to most skiers it is never too early to start planning a ski vacation. At Sugarloaf Mountain in Maine, early-season skiers will get some price breaks. Two days of skiing and two nights' lodging at the Slopeside Sugarloaf Mountain Hotel cost \$104 U.S. per person, based on double occupancy, which isn't a bad deal considering that the normal cost of a daily lift ticket alone is \$28 U.S. Up to Dec. 18, though, lift tickets cost only \$18 U.S. a day. If you want to get in shape for the season, a five-day midweek package is offered at Sugarloaf from Nov. 24 through Dec. 18 - it includes lodging, lift tickets and daily lessons, for \$310 U.S. per person. At Bolton Valley, Vermont, Canadians will get a price break by waiting until March. That is when the self-contained resort near Burlington is offering its ski-and-swim package with Canadian dollars at par with U.S. dollars. Prices for the package, including lodging, daily lift tickets and use of the pool and extensive sports facilities, range from \$128 per person double for two days to \$275 per person for five days. Bolton Valley also has nice cross-country facilities, and cross-country packages are moderately priced - for example, \$282 U.S. per person for five days with lodging, use of the trails and pool, full breakfast each day and three dinners.

Prices for daily lift tickets at many of the better-known U.S. ski resorts are hitting or exceeding the \$30 U.S. level this winter. Multi-day tickets are usually less expensive than single day, and midweek tickets cheaper than weekend ones. The best deals of all are usually ski-week packages. For example, even at Stowe, Vermont, where prices tend to be high, five-day ski-week packages including lodging and lift tickets start at \$453 U.S. per person daily, based on double occupancy, and children under 12 ski and stay free in the same room with their parents. Cut-rate travel to and from Amsterdam is possible for those willing to act as on-board couriers for freight deliveries. A return flight between Amsterdam and Toronto or Montreal will cost \$250 or \$325, depending on the date of travel. Couriers are allowed to take only a carry-on bag, because they check through luggage for the courier company on each direction of the trip.

Couriers do not have to see the cargo through customs; they are met on each end by representatives of the company.

Trips usually are for one or two weeks, although a few are three weeks long. The minimum age for couriers is 18; there is no maximum age. Couriers must, however, be mobile. Journeys originate in Toronto; couriers from Montreal are flown to and from Toronto as part of the deal.

For further information, write to: F.B. On Board Courier Services Inc., 10105 Ryan Ave., Dorval, Que., H9P 1A2, or call (514) 631-7925. It won't appeal to those who want to get away from snow and cold weather, but travellers in search of spectacular scenery, unusual wildlife and an exotic destination may be interested in some low-priced cruise opportunities to Antarctica. Travel to the southernmost continent is normally very expensive. Now, though, the cruise ship MS Mediterranean Sky has scheduled several 10-day cruises from Tierra del Fuego in southern Argentina to the Antarctic, and rates for a berth in a six-bed cabin start as low as \$682 U.S., including the flight from Buenos Aires to the port of embarkation.

The cruise sails through the Beagle Channel, Drake Passage and South Shetland Islands and calls at several research stations on the Antarctic peninsula. Antarctic experts and multilingual guides are on board to keep passengers informed about what they are seeing. Departures are scheduled in December, January and February, summer in the southern hemisphere.

Details are available from Latour, 114 E. 28th St., New York, N.Y., 10016, telephone (212) 523-3020.

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